

Sergeant Er — no thanks. Christmas is a busy time for the force. I'll get back to the station then.

David And may the force be with you.

The Sergeant exits hesitantly DL

Matron (screaming) Ahhh!

David and Hubert react and then rush to open the curtains. Jane, Leslie and Matron are still there but all we can see now of Matron, who has slipped off the ledge, are her head and her arms as she clings to Leslie's waist. Leslie is kneeling on the ledge holding on to the open window

Jane She slipped.

Hubert Are you all right, Matron?

David That's a bloody silly question.

Hubert Don't let go, will you, Matron?

Matron So's that!

David Hubert, get down to the floor below. See if you can grab Matron from underneath.

Hubert Right! (He stops) When you say grab her from underneath — ?

David Hurry up! (He pushes Hubert out)

Hubert exits UL

Matron, see if you can kick in the window on the floor below.

Matron I don't think I can hold on much longer. I'm beginning to feel drowsy.

David (looking out of the window) Where's that idiot, Hubert?

Sister enters from UL wheeling an old gentleman, Bill Lesley, in a wheelchair

Sister Excuse me, Dr Mortimore —

David hastily closes the curtains

David Yes, Sister?!

Sister Well, Matron asked me to find Mr Lesley and we've found him.

David (confused) Mr Lesley?

Sister Only he was in C Ward, not B Ward.

David What?!

Bill (giving David a genial wave) Hello.

Sister And it's not gout or piles, just old age.

David Sister! Matron is holding on by her fingertips!

Sister Well, Christmas is always hectic but she mustn't give way.

David Get out!

Sister hurries out UL

Bill is left DL. He looks around, smiling

Bill (to David) I'm going to have my own room at last, am I?

David Excuse me.

Bill (seeing the drinks tray on the sideboard) Oh, and you've given me a private bar.

David Excuse me. (He hurries up to the window and opens the curtains)

Bill gets out of his wheelchair and quite nimbly goes to the drinks

David (hurrying to Matron) Help is on its way, Matron.

Matron I want to go to sleep.

David (shaking Matron's shoulders) No, you don't. (To Jane) In the corridor outside there's a hose reel, quick.

Jane You're not going to hit her, are you?

David I'm going to try and pull her up. Just get it!

Leslie Don't leave me alone with the vicar.

Jane The vicar?

David Just get the hose reel!

Jane hurries out DR

Leslie (calling) Don't leave me, Mum!

David Shut up, you horrible boy! (He slaps him across the back of the head)

Leslie Ouch!

Leslie lets go with one hand to hold on to his head and loses his balance for a moment

Matron disappears from view

Matron (*as she goes*) Ahhh!

David looks over the edge in horror. There is a pause

David (*calling*) Oh. Well caught, Hubert! ... Haul her in! ... First class!

Mike enters DR, wheeling the trolley

Mike We'll put Matron on ... God, where is she?

David She went over the edge.

Mike (*averting his eyes*) Oh, no!

David Dr Bonney caught her! They're on the floor below. Give them a hand.

Mike I don't know how Matron feels but I'm feeling quite queasy.

Mike exits DR leaving trolley across the bathroom door

David (*to Leslie*) Come on in, you.

Leslie I'm not moving until my dad gets here.

David (*furiously*) Your dad's very busy being a hero.

Leslie A hero?

David He just saved Matron.

Leslie takes this in

Leslie (*happily incredulous*) That's my father? (*He leans over the edge to have a look*)

David Yes! So you can come in now.

Leslie That funny little man's my dad?

David I told you, yes!

Leslie leans over further

Leslie (*calling down*) Dad!

David Careful!

David hauls Leslie in and shuts the windows. Leslie moves down to Bill who has just got back into his chair with a full glass of whisky

Leslie (*to Bill*) I've found my dad!

Bill looks around the room

It's amazing!

Leslie shakes Bill's hand excitedly which results in the glass in Bill's other hand shooting all the contents into the air and over his head. Leslie doesn't know whether to laugh or cry. Bill sits there pondering where the water came from

Hey, that's great. That's fantastic! (*Laughing and crying, he shakes David's hand*) Really amazing! I've found him! (*He suddenly bursts into tears and grabs David*)

Bill (*to Leslie*) Have a cuddle, I'm broadminded.

David (*to Leslie*) Come on. Let's get out of here and meet your dad downstairs.

Jane enters struggling with a fire extinguisher (red, with a short rubber nozzle)

Jane I couldn't find a hose reel.

David It doesn't matter now!

Leslie (*smiling through his tears*) Mum — I've found Dad.

Leslie is hugging David. She naturally thinks David has told Leslie the truth. She puts the fire extinguisher by the chair DR

Jane Oh, I'm so happy for you both.

Leslie Isn't it fantastic!

Leslie runs to Jane and they hug

Hubert enters

Hubert They're treating Matron for cuts and bruises.

Leslie takes a step to Hubert and points at him

Leslie My hero!

Hubert looks around to see to whom Leslie is referring. His eyes meet Bill who smiles and waves. Hubert waves back. Leslie advances on Hubert, hugs him, twirls him around and kisses him. Hubert, astonished, disentangles himself

Hello, Dad!

There is a brief pause and then Hubert realizes the situation. He looks furious and turns to David. David puts his hands together imploring Hubert to agree to the pretence. Music as —

— *the CURTAIN falls*